

are hanging on by a thread. Those out of work in Virginia aren't struggling any less than those in Ohio, Michigan, or California, where the statewide unemployment rates are higher. I believe that this is an issue of fairness that needs to be corrected.

To reach out to those who are looking for work in Virginia's 10th Congressional District, which includes some areas that reached an unemployment rate of 8 percent this summer, I am sponsoring a job fair in Frederick County in October. I held a similar event in Loudoun County in May and more than 70 employers attended to meet with more than 3,500 job-seekers.

People across the country are hurting and Virginia is no exception. While I believe voting for the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act will help many who have felt the brunt of the recession, I remain disappointed that unemployed Virginians were left behind. This measure should be amended to help all those across the country, rather than using an arbitrary threshold to determine who is most deserving.

IN RECOGNITION OF VIRGINIA
GRANATO AND HER DECADE OF
SERVICE AS PRESIDENT OF THE
ROOSEVELT ISLAND DISABLED
ASSOCIATION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Virginia Granato, an outstanding New Yorker who has distinguished herself through her dedication and service to her community and to our nation. Virginia Granato is being honored this month by the membership of the Roosevelt Island Disabled Association (RIDA) on the occasion of her retirement from its presidency, a post in which she served with distinction for a decade.

Virginia Granato is a revered figure among the residents of the very special Roosevelt Island community, a unique enclave in the most densely populated county in the nation. She delivered extraordinary and effective leadership to the large population of people with disabilities on the Island. In addition to her devoted and effective service as President of RIDA, Virginia served on the Board of Directors of Wheelchair Charities and on the Community Advisory Board of Coler-Goldwater Hospital.

Virginia Granato was one of the original pioneers of Roosevelt Island, first moving into the Island's Eastwood housing development in 1976. She became a powerful and respected voice for Roosevelt Island residents with disabilities, pressing to make the Island's transportation more accessible, counseling planners on the design and layout of apartment complexes, and facilitating a lending program for residents in need of wheelchairs and walkers.

In leading the Roosevelt Island Disabled Association for a decade, Virginia Granato carried out RIDA's vital mission of improving the quality of life of Roosevelt Islanders with disabilities. As RIDA President, she helped organize and secure funding for regular field trips by Association members to athletic contests,

cultural institutions, musical performances and recitals, amusement parks and other recreational venues.

For more than a third of a century, Virginia Granato has been a leader of the Roosevelt Island community that she loves. She has volunteered for various worthwhile civic causes and selflessly devoted thousands of hours of her time. Virginia Granato offers an example of the finest impulses of the human spirit, and through her dedication and compassion, thousands of lives have been affected for the better.

Madam Speaker, for her leadership, dedication and volunteer service over the years, I ask that my distinguished colleagues join me in recognizing the enormous contributions to the civic life of her community and our nation made by Virginia Granato.

INTRODUCING PUBLIC SAFETY
INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICA-
TIONS (PSIC) GRANT PROGRAM

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that will help America's first responders keep their communities safer by solving a dangerous deficiency in their emergency communications capabilities. Our first responders are also our first preventers, and their ability to communicate seamlessly and effectively on an interoperable network during an emergency helps save lives and protect critical infrastructure.

For over 7 years, I have worked to prevent a tragic repetition of the communications problems that resulted in thousands of deaths on 9/11—when the lack of an interoperable network prevented the NYPD from warning firefighters that the Twin Towers were glowing red and it was time to evacuate.

My home State of California is prone to natural disasters, especially earthquakes and wild fires. Alarming, there are still instances when our firefighters have relied on runners and drivers to relay messages during an emergency. This occurs when multiple companies respond to the same incident, each carrying different equipment.

An important piece of the solution to this crisis is the Public Safety Interoperable Communications, PSIC, grant program, which provides funding to purchase interoperable communications equipment and undertake training to use it.

Since 2007, the PSIC program has provided nearly \$1 billion in grants to state and local governments, and the deadline to spend the funds is next year. All states were required to develop Statewide Communications Interoperability Plans, SCIP. Unfortunately, according to the Department of Homeland Security, its approval of these plans was delayed until the spring of 2008, in part because DHS wanted to ensure they were subject to appropriate environmental reviews. This is understandable; however, the delay in approving SCIP plans means that not all of the grant funds can be spent before next year's deadline.

The PSIC program is vital to public safety; it should be allowed the necessary time and funding. The legislation I introduce today—

which is a companion bill to S.1694 introduced by Senators Rockefeller and Hutchinson—would guarantee a one-year extension to spend the grant money, with an option for an additional year approved on a case-by-case basis.

While I urge prompt action on this bill, this will in no way relieve us of the obligation to complete the build-out of the 700 megahertz spectrum so that we develop true national interoperability. I am enormously disappointed that, despite universal agreement on the goal, real progress has been so slow.

In conclusion, the PSIC program must be continued. It is a building block in the effort to equip our communities to respond to a terrorist attack or natural disaster. I urge prompt consideration and passage.

RECOGNIZING JOHN R. RIBNER

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize John R. Ribner as he is honored at the Flint Youth Projects' 15th Annual Roast and Toast on October 1st in Burton Michigan.

John Ribner grew up during the 1940s in New York City. He started high school on a baseball scholarship at St. Anne's Academy in New York. After two years he transferred to North Branch High School in Michigan to help care for an ailing relative. He continued his schooling and athletics at North Branch, playing several sports and making the first team in All-State basketball. This led to a basketball scholarship to Central Michigan University. John obtained his teaching degree from that school and in 1964 began teaching with the Flint School District.

He taught at Fairview School, Holmes School and Whittier. During this time he was named Teacher of the Year by the school district and by Flint Sales and Marketing Group. He is now retired but still devotes his time and energy to helping children in need. Along with his wife, Dolly, John distributes turkeys at Thanksgiving every year to families and children. He believes that many people over the years have given to him and the turkey drive is a way to give back to the community. He said, "Of all my life's accomplishments, I am especially proud of the turkey drive for this reason."

As a trustee of the Westwood Heights Board of Education, John continues his interest and commitment to education. Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the achievements and contributions of John R. Ribner.

IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM
THREATENS THE WORLD

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Mr. COBLE. Madam Speaker, I rise to express my grave concerns over Iran's illicit nuclear program. In the midst of all the attention being paid to issues such as the economy and

health care reform, we must not overlook the growing threat that Iran poses to the security of the United States and our allies in the Middle East. Every day, Iran is working to develop the capacity to produce a nuclear weapon, a point from which I fear there may be no return.

The president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has left no illusion of his desire to wipe Israel off the map. Through his emboldened and misguided leadership, Iran has exerted its hegemony throughout the Middle East with complete disregard for the truth and resolute intolerance.

If Iran crosses the nuclear weapons threshold, I have no doubt that this will provoke a renewed race for nuclear arms in the Middle East. Radical political factions throughout the region will be empowered and moderates, who are working to develop a comprehensive peace agreement, will lose their much-needed support. Terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah, Hamas and Al Qaeda will be strengthened and emboldened to pursue a nuclear weapon of their own—which is our worst nightmare.

Thanks to the Internet, we know that democracy and human rights in Iran are an illusion. Some Iranian leaders would argue with that assertion and also contend that their country has no interest in pursuing a nuclear weapons program. We cannot afford to rely on hollow assurances such as these.

We need valid and thorough inspections immediately to verify exactly what Iran is doing with its nuclear program. The only way to deal with Iran's recalcitrant leaders is to leverage our political influence and force them to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA, to conduct inspections. Unfortunately for the Iranian people, this means enacting the Iran Sanctions Act and the Iran Refined Petroleum Act, which would result in severe consequences for Iran and its people.

There is no simple solution to Iran's threat. Measures we can take right now include enacting legislation and supporting policies that will force Iran's leaders to allow IAEA inspectors unfettered access to conduct nuclear weapons inspections. There is far too much at stake to rely on promises from the same Iranian leaders who openly profess their desire to wipe Israel off the map, deny allegations of human rights violations, and provoke violence around the world against those who embrace liberty and justice.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, unfortunately, on Tuesday, September 22, 2009, I missed three recorded votes on the House floor. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall 720, "yea" on rollcall 721, and "yea" on rollcall 722.

AGAINST PASSAGE OF H.R. 3548

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss H.R. 3548, the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2009.

Madam Speaker, let there be no doubt that I understand that our economy faces historic and unprecedented challenges and I will remain committed to working with Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle to enact responsible legislation which puts money back into the hands of those who can really turn our economy around—the American people and small businesses.

However, H.R. 3548 extends the current unemployment benefits extension program, as established by the FY 2008 supplemental, and extended in two subsequent acts, by an extra 13 weeks for only those States with unemployment rates above 8.5%. Enactment of H.R. 3548 would cause individuals in States with unemployment rates in excess of 8.5% to be eligible for benefits for a total duration of 92 weeks.

Madam Speaker, like you, I believe that a key component of an economic recovery plan is assistance for the unemployed. Unfortunately, this legislation would only apply to unemployed individuals in 29 States with unemployment rates above 8.5%. To be clear, individuals in 21 other States would be ineligible to receive compensation under this legislation. Virginia's current unemployment rate stands at 6.5%. Thus, Virginia residents are not eligible for these benefits. I cannot support legislation that does not allow Virginia residents to benefit from the formulas adopted under this legislation.

Even more egregious is that businesses in Virginia and other excluded States are required to foot the bill for these benefits via the extension of the Federal Unemployment surtax through 2010. This tax would otherwise expire at the end of this year. Madam Speaker, I cannot support legislation that imposes a tax on businesses in Virginia when funds generated under this tax will be of zero benefit to the residents of Virginia, or the remaining 20 States in the Nation.

There are many counties and cities in Virginia that have unemployment rates above 8.5% and yet citizens living in those areas who are unemployed will receive no benefits from this legislation even as employers in the same areas will pay taxes taking money out of the local economy and seeing it circulate instead in some other part of the country for the arbitrary reason that statewide unemployment is above a particular percentage. Further, the individual who is out of a job and can't find another is suffering through the same situation for themselves and their families no matter where they live. Madam Speaker, this legislation is unfair to my constituents and that is why I voted against it.

HONORING CATHOLIC SISTERS

HON. MARK E. SOUDER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Mr. SOUDER, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of the gentlewoman from Ohio's resolution (H. Res. 441) recognizing the contributions of the Catholic Sisters to the United States.

The efforts of Catholic Sisters have had an incredible impact on my district in northeast Indiana. Saint Mother Theodore Guerin was one of the first brave souls to leave France in response to the call of Bishop Simon Brute of the Diocese of Vincennes to come to Indiana and help establish a system of schools for education.

Bishop Brute's motivation for seeking the support and involvement of religious women for this calling came from his experience working with another religious Sister, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton.

Saint Mother Theodore traveled across the wilds of then-frontier Indiana and established many parish schools across the State, including in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Along with the Holy Cross Brothers and Fathers based at the University of Notre Dame, Saint Mother Theodore had a major impact on the creation of parish schools throughout northeast Indiana. That we have a successful Catholic school system in my district is due in no small part to her early efforts.

Sts. Theodore and Elizabeth Ann Seton have left lasting legacies in my district. The Catholic parish across from my kids' alma mater is dedicated to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and the relatively new Latin Mass community in Fort Wayne is named for Saint Mother Theodore Guerin.

The foundation of education laid down by these pioneering sisters is today embodied by the example of the University of Saint Francis and its president, Sister Elise Kriss, OSF. You will not find a more humble and devoted servant than Sister Elise, who has led her institution through a period of rapid growth. She is a strong example of Christian leadership for both her students and the entire Fort Wayne community.

The Religious Sisters' contribution to my district extends well beyond education. St. Joseph Hospital was founded by Fort Wayne Bishop John Henry Luers in 1869. The Poor Handmaidens of Jesus Christ subsequently responded to his call to help serve the German-speaking immigrants of the area and continued assisting the hospital and many area parishes. They now lead the St. Joseph Community Health Foundation which has been a key partner with me and my staff as we work to address the plight of Fort Wayne's increasing Burmese refugee population.

My district originally included Huntington County, which is home to the motherhouse of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters. The Victory Knoll Sisters would always write to me about the cause of peace and justice and the plight of different people around our country and the world.

These are just a few of the many dedicated religious women that are faithfully serving in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, but are a good representation of the important legacy they provide our region. I would like to